



Serious Case Review Group Terms of Reference

1. APPOINTMENT

The Serious Case Review Group (SCR) is appointed by the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) and shall be made up of partner agencies of the Board.

2. PURPOSE

The Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) is the statutory vehicle for co-ordinating and evaluating effectiveness of safeguarding and promoting welfare of children within the City of Plymouth.

The purpose of the SCR is:-

- 2.1 to apply the statutory guidance and examine and, where necessary, initiate a Serious Case Review (SCR) in circumstances where there has been a death of a child or young person and abuse or neglect is known or suspected, or where there has been a serious injury and there are concerns about interagency working; and
- 2.2 as a consequence, improve inter-agency working to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the SCR shall be drawn from representatives of partner agencies of the PSCB as follows:-

- 3.1 Devon and Cornwall Police (Police);
- 3.2 Assistant Director of Children, Young People and Families;
- 3.3 Consultant Paediatrician, Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust (Health);
- 3.4 Designated Doctor (Health);
- 3.5 Principal Educational Psychologist (Local Authority);
- 3.6 NEW Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (Health);
- 3.7 Safeguarding Manager (Local Authority);
- 3.8 Devon and Cornwall Probation Service (Probation);
- 3.9 Lead Officer for Development and Learning (PSCB).

Membership of the SCR shall be reviewed by the Independent Chair of the PSCB on a bi-annual basis to assess value of participation and its reflection of the demands and needs within the City to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There is no time limit upon membership within the SCR.

Members are expected to make every effort to attend all meetings and disseminate information to their agency. Attendance will be recorded formally through meeting minutes. Members of the SCR are expected to provide information and expertise to decision making and to conduct its responsibilities and duties.

Appointments to the SCR shall be made by the PSCB, based upon nominations or expressions of interest received from City stakeholder groups and sectors. The PSCB may seek independent expressions of interests to represent a key group where it has determined that such a group are not already represented. This may occur in response to local and national intelligence, findings from Serious Case Reviews or other methods of learning/indication of concern.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The SCR has been appointed to undertake the following functions of the PSCB:-

- 4.1 undertake reviews of serious cases in accordance with Regulation 5 (1) and (2) of Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006 and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children as may be place from time to time;
- 4.2 identify lessons to improve the way in which agencies and individuals work individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- 4.3 disseminate lessons learned effectively and implement recommendations in a timely manner;
- 4.4 ensure the child's daily life experiences and an understanding of his or her welfare, wishes and feelings are at the centre of the SCR irrespective of whether the child died or was seriously harmed.

5. DUTIES

The SCR shall, upon being informed of a critical incident involving a child whereby the child has died or been seriously injured and abuse or neglect is suspected:-

- 5.1 Convene a SCR group meeting to look at the case;
- 5.2 Review information held by agencies and make a

- recommendation to the Independent Chair of the PSCB as to whether an SCR should be undertaken;
- 5.3 The Independent Chair of the PSCB will make the decision as to whether or not the case meets the threshold of Regulations 5(1) and (2) of the Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006 and will inform the Chair of the SCR within one month. The Independent Chair of the PSCB will inform Ofsted and the SCR National Panel of Independent Experts of the decision to conduct the SCR.
- 5.4 Subject to 5.7 below, the SCR Group shall appoint a panel and Independent Lead Reviewer too oversee the SCR;
- 5.5 The SCR Group shall draft focused and specific terms of reference for the conduct of the SCR;
- 5.6 The Panel will then responsible for:-
- aiming to complete the review within the timescales set out in the relevant Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance as may be in force from time to time;
 - finalising terms of reference;
 - notifying agencies of the requirement to participate in the SCR;
 - quality assuring the information and if necessary obtaining legal advice;
 - ensuring that lessons to be learned, whether single or multi-agency are put into a SMART action plan, and that there is no delay in implementing actions to safeguard children;
 - identify a co-facilitator to assist the Independent Lead Reviewer and ensure the Independent Lead Reviewer has all completed documentation;
 - work with the Independent Lead Reviewer to decide how to involve the family in the SCR;
 - seek the advice of Devon and Cornwall Police and the Crown Prosecution Service if criminal proceedings are underway, in order to prevent impact by the SCR;
 - prepare and conclude a report and action to be presented to PSCB and provide a copy to the National Panel of Independent Experts prior to publication.
- 5.7 If the criteria for a SCR is not met, the SCR Group may decide to carry out a multi-agency audit of the case to ensure lessons are learned.
- 5.8 The SCR group will ensure all action plans are implemented.
- 5.9 The SCR group will decide whether the SCR should be disseminated in formal training. If this is so then the review

will be anonymised and sent to the PSCB Lead Officer for Learning and Development.

5.10 The SCR group shall embed and implement throughout its business the Ten Wishes of children and young people;

5.11 The SCR group shall promote equality and diversity through anti-discriminatory practice and learning opportunities.

- 6. ACCOUNTABILITY** The SCR Group is accountable to the PSCB.
- 7. INVITED TO ATTEND** In addition to members of the SCR group, it may be appropriate to invite subject matter experts to provide advice, support and information.
- 8. IN ATTENDANCE** The PSCB Safeguarding Business Manager shall be an officer in attendance at the SCR group.
- 9. QUORUM** For SCR group meetings to be quorate, at least one representative from the following key agencies must be in attendance:-
- 9.1 Local Authority
 - 9.2 Health
 - 9.3 Police
- In the absence of a quorum the power to make decisions shall cease and the meeting may be adjourned to another date/time.
- 10 BUSINESS SUPPORT** The PSCB Business Manager, on behalf of the Independent Chair, will ensure that the SCR group is properly equipped to carry out its role and shall provide support and advice.
- 11 CHAIRMAN:** The SCR group will elect a Chair and Vice Chair to provide leadership and promote PSCB business at the SCR group. The Chair and the Vice Chair shall be elected by SCR group members, through a vote, on a bi-annual basis.
- 10. DEPUTISING** In the absence of the Chair of the SCR group, the Vice Chair shall chair the meeting.
- 12 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** Everyone in attendance at SCR group must declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest. These shall be recorded in the meeting minutes. Anyone with a relevant or material interest in a matter under consideration must be excluded from the discussion. This shall be recorded in the minutes.

13 MEETINGS The SCR group will sit on a quarterly basis, subject at all times to receipt of a critical incident report when the SCR group shall sit in response.

14 COMMUNICATION The SCR Group and PSCB will formally communicate through the following mechanisms:-

- 14.1 at PSCB Board meetings through Chair's attendance;
- 14.2 by written report;
- 14.3 any other form agreed by LAPP and PSCB.

Minutes of the SCR group shall not be made publicly available.

15 REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE Every two years SCR group will conduct a review of its purpose and effectiveness including compliance with its Terms of Reference, and propose any adjustments which may be required. These will be reviewed by the PSCB.

The Terms of Reference shall be next reviewed:

By SCR Group : February 2019

By PSCB: March 2019

16 APPROVED BY: SCR Group Chair on: 8 March 2017

Independent Chair of PSCB on: 8 March 2017